An artificial language
Esperanto

Konstrui Pli Bonan Lingvon
(To Build a Better Language)

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6 Latin Modern-Languages
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PREFACE

As part of my sixth year in high school, I got the task to write a paper about any random subject. For me, it was a mission to choose an unfamiliar topic. This way I would be able to teach myself something foreign and spread the new knowledge.

After the reflection of several options, I have chosen for the artificial and almost forgotten language Esperanto. Having decided on Esperanto as my theme, I was full of excitement to start writing about one of my interests, languages. In that way, it would be feasible for me to learn new things that could enrich my knowledge and could help me in the development of some new perspectives.

My study selection has contributed to the choice of writing in English. Next year, I am willing to study applied languages English-Chinese. Therefore I see this as the excellent opportunity to refine my English. All of this would not have been possible without the help of Mr. Ives Delporte. He has given me a lot of advice about the language and the content of my work. My mentor, Mrs. Ulrike Houwenhuyse, on the other hand, has been able to assist me with the structural layout in order to handle a neat style. The next one I would like to thank is Mr. Cyreen Marcel Knockaert. As a board member of the Flemish Federation of Esperanto, voluntary librarian of the Flemish Federation of Esperanto and voluntary contributor of the Library of Heritage from Hendrik Conscience, he has taken his time to formulate an elaborate answer to all my questions. At last, I would like to show gratitude to my parents who have helped me to justify my choice of picking a rather unparticular theme written in English and to my brother who loaned the books I needed in the University library of Ghent.
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0 Introduction

The subject I wanted to discover was the artificial language Esperanto. I was determined to start writing this paper. In this research, it is the purpose of showing all the different elements related to the language Esperanto and how it can function as an international neutral auxiliary language.

First of all, I have stipulated the definitions of a natural language and of an artificial one. This will be followed by the intriguing history of artificial languages over time.

In the second chapter, the different artificial codes as sign language and Braille are studied in-depth. Furthermore, the language Volapük and the successor of Esperanto, Ido, has been discussed in this paper. This study would not be complete without some of the best known artificial languages within the film industry as it is the case in Star Trek, Avatar and in Game of Thrones. This section ends with a small elucidation of Tolkien’s languages in literature.

In the following part, I have scrutinised the possible problems with the creation of a world language. All the factors involved such as the mother tongue, the society and the involvement in culture with music and media as the biggest elements will be studied. In the end of this chapter, there will be a clear look at the reason why languages such as Esperanto were able to expand.

Further on, I have examined the epitome of Esperanto by screening the artificer Zamenhof’s purpose of creating Esperanto. This is also the exquisite moment to explore how the idea has grown and which was the base of success of the artificial language. As a logical consequence, the spreading of the language has been investigated.

The next chapter is all about the language itself. I have pored over the grammar with the Sixteen Rules of Esperanto, followed by a short examination of the vocabulary and the structure of the language. As said by many, it is an easy language to learn. This is also one of the reasons why it can be used as an international auxiliary language.

Afterwards, I have taken a look at the evolution of the vivacity of Esperanto and where it is spoken. This chapter is in fact an introduction to the study of the success or failure of the language and to the question if it would be a necessity to have a new kind of artificial language.

The end of this paper is my own opinion about the future of Esperanto and the future of British and American English. These last two parts are a reasonable evaluation of the possibilities for both languages and their variations.
1 An artificial language

The first section of this paper will examine the definition of an artificial language and a natural language. Furthermore, this chapter will analyse the short history of the artificial language.

1.1 Definition

A constructed or artificial language is a language that is consciously created by a ‘conlanger’. The literal meaning of this word is one person or a group who has created a new language. So, in fact, it is a language that has been constructed by one man for his own purpose. It happens very often that other people do not use this artificial language, because they do not feel a connection, or they do not see the value of using it.

The designation of ‘constructed language’ has been invented by the Danish linguist Otto Jespersen in An International Language in 1928. In addition, there are some similarities between an artificial language and a natural language. The principle ingredients like the grammar, phonology and vocabulary are usually derived from a natural language (Nordquist, 2016).

In contrast to an artificial language stands a natural language. We can define this as “a language that has developed in the usual way as a method of communicating between people, rather than language that has been created, for example for computers: Computers are increasingly being used for natural language processing” (Cambridge University Press, n.d.).

1.2 History

For a long period, people have been searching for new resources to communicate in a very approachable way in order to use it as an extra benefit. The purpose was to make the languages less arbitrary, less ambiguous and as regularly as possible. The language inventors often believed that this kind of new language would create a lot of possibilities in order to obtain world peace. In fact, those artificial languages have not really been of much interest to linguists. We can interpret this as a normal reaction of those linguists. They saw such an artificial language as a completely useless thing because of the lack of native speakers and also because of their absence of historical origin.

Since the 17th century, more than a thousand artificial languages have been proposed. Most of them were just published as a brief sketch and a few really worked out. Luckily, some of them did succeed. Artificial languages can be categorised into different types. We can define a priori language, which has a vocabulary based on abstract, fundamental ideas. This philosophical language is usually a representation of true conceptual structures. This priori language dates back to the beginning of the 17th century. Furthermore, we can outline a posteriori language. This interlanguage or auxiliary language has a vocabulary based on the natural language and it is declared as an easy language in order to be a good resource for international communication. The last category is the modern one. This has characteristics prescribed by their creator’s affective purposes. They are also called fictional languages or conlangs (Okrent, 2013).
2 Artificial codes and languages

This chapter deals with the analysis of some artificial codes as Braille and sign language and with several artificial languages of which Volapük and Ido are two examples. This section will also study the many different languages used in films, like Star Trek, Avatar, Game of Thrones. At last, we will have a closer look at the invention of Tolkien’s own language in literature.

2.1 Sign language

Sign language is a visual medium of communication using gestures, facial expression and body language. It is mostly used by people who have a hearing disorder or who are completely deaf. Many people consider the sign language as a worldwide universal language, but this is absolutely not the case. Every country, even every region or city has its own variation of this language. This is definitely striking in Great Britain. Within Britain, there are significant differences from city to city, these are called regional variations. These are comparable to the accents and dialects within a spoken language.

The sign language can also be seen as an artificial language because it has been created by the people with a hearing impairment and those who are deaf. There are a lot of discussions going on about the fact who has created and used the sign language at first. We are sure about one thing, namely, it has been invented to make their daily life more bearable and also more effective (British-sign, n.d.).

2.2 Braille

Braille is not really a language, it is another kind of notation of existing languages. Although it is a tool for communication, it is more suitable to classify it within the group of codes. It has been invented by Louis Braille, a blind Frenchman, around 1824. He was a student at the National Institute for Blind Youth in Paris. Braille wanted to read as many books as possible, but there was one significant hurdle. All the books were constructed using raised print, which was very complicated to produce and also very difficult to read (Image 1). Therefore, he thought about something that was easy to read with the fingertips. Louis Braille was only fifteen years old when he invented the Braille system.

Image 1: The Braille system

The Braille system is used by people with a bad vision and by those who are completely blind. This is a complex system of elevated dots. Those two-dimensional dots make it possible to feel with their fingers what they are reading. It is used in the mother tongue of thousands of people all over the world.

Braille is definitely an artificial code. Louis Braille himself created it for his own sake in the first place. This inventive system is nowadays still an acquisition for the blind people and those with imperfect eyesight. The young Louis Braille used the tactile night writing from Charles Barbier as a base to create his own code (American Foundation for the blind, n.d.).
2.3 Volapük

The name ‘Volapük’ does literally mean ‘World Language’. It was invented in 1879 by Johann Martin Schleyer (Image 2), a German polyglot, who created it because 'God had asked him to'. The purpose was to use it in order to express thoughts as clearly and accurately as possible. The vocabulary of Volapük exists of mainly English vocabulary and a Germanic modified grammar. Furthermore, Schleyer has tried to exclude those sounds that would be difficult to pronounce by speakers of other languages.

The success of Volapük was often very exaggerated by its supporters. Some of the adherents claimed there were a million speakers. None of this is actually true. Schleyer kept trying to evolve Volapük in order to achieve a better auxiliary language. This constant reform resulted in linguistic instability. With the invention of Esperanto eight years later, Volapük was considered to be dead. Of course, it had some supporters, but Esperanto took the upper hand (Tonkin, 1997).

2.4 Ido

After the first World Esperanto Congress in 1905 in Boulogne (see further), people started criticizing Esperanto. The ‘Boulogne Declaration’ defined the Esperanto movement as a neutral international auxiliary language. This resulted in 1907-1908 in the fact that an unofficial Delegation for the Adoption of an International Auxiliary Language suggested a variant of Esperanto. This variant was called Ido, which means ‘offspring’. After the failed negotiations between the Delegation and Zamenhof, they decided to start their own completely new movement. This is why they often mention it to be the corrected and better form of Esperanto.

Nonetheless, Ido grew rapidly. Estimators think that 20-25% of the Esperantists deserted to Ido. By 1911 there were 40 Ido groups in France and around 200 groups in total. After the oppression of the First World War, both Esperanto and Ido were largely divided. It was only Esperanto that grew strong enough to regain its adherents. Ido continued to exist in a far smaller quantity than Esperanto (Tonkin, 1997).
2.5 Films and literature

More recently, we have to study the phenomenon of artificial languages within films and literature. Lots of artificial languages have been invented because of this industry. The most popular constructed languages have been analysed in the subsequent part.

2.5.1 Star Trek

The very successful films of Star Trek contain a very well-known artificial language, Klingon, named after the bumpy headed aliens (Image 3). At first, it was invented to create a more realistic element to those extraordinary aliens. At the beginning of the Star Trek films in 1968, the Klingons could only express themselves with some weird sounds. Subsequently, they were subtitled in English. Afterwards, the producer decided to ask linguist Marc Okrant to create a language, especially for the Klingon aliens.

Klingon has now become an equivalent language. It has its own vocabulary and grammar. Even some variations have developed over time. In addition, the Star Trek films are shown in countries all over the world. As a result, the Klingon is worldwide spoken with some eccentric fans (Qov, qurgh, 2015).

Nowadays there are still fans obsessed with Klingon. They use the language in order to write songs, to accept their marriage vows or even to translate existing works from famous writers as Shakespeare into their own, special, artificial language. It is even used by some nerds in the series The Big Bang Theory (Eldridge, n.d.).
2.5.2 Avatar

Another well-known artificial language is Na'vi. This language is used in the popular film Avatar (Image 4) and in the games derived from the film. The director, James Cameron, decided that his film needed something special. Just as in the Star Trek films, he taught his aliens their own language. The linguist Paul Frommer created a very enhanced vocabulary and grammar, based on the Maori language. This is one of the three official languages of New Zealand (Eldridge, n.d.).

Paul Frommer is a doctorate linguist who studied at the Marshall School of Business. He tried to create a language that could easily be learnt by the actors and was not too complicated to pronounce. The language of the Na'vi is not like any ordinary one. It has an oral history and no components of the language have been written down. The colloquial language evolved throughout some stories. Na'vi has its own alphabet particularly based on the English one with two big differences. In Na'vi, we can see the use of two diacritics (ä and ì) and the use of three ejectives (px, tx and kx). These ejectives can be produced by the obstruction of airflow in the vocal tract, named the glottis (Cambridge University press, n.d.).

2.5.3 Game of Thrones

Many may have heard about Game of Thrones. This is a massive desirable television show based on the imaginative novel written by George R.R. Martin. In this popular show, the artificial language Dothraki is practised. The people who speak it, are called the Dothraki's. This nomadic tribe lives in the central lowlands of Essos (Image 5). The Dothraki do not have any writing system. They are illiterate, like the Na'vi.

The language has been created by David J. Peterson of the Language Creation Society. Dothraki is not the only one, but it is the most known language in the Game of Thrones series. Some other created languages are High Valyrian, Skroth and Asshai'i. Peterson has invented the languages with an underlying thought: When a tribe lives on the central plains, they fear the sea. The communication needs of that tribe are limited. That is why he adjusts the vocabulary to the most common actions and functions of that certain tribe ("Dothraki (language)", n.d.).
2.5.4 Tolkien

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (Image 6) was a philologist and lexicographer. So, he studied languages in written historical sources and he compiled and wrote dictionaries. He was also specialised in Old and Middle English. A factoid is that he created his own language to obviate the censorship during the battles of the First World War in which he had to fight in the Battle of the Somme. It was there that he could use his secret communication tool to pass the coordinates of his accurate location to his wife.

During his life from 1892 to 1973, he wrote many novels such as *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, but his creation of the Elvish languages came some years before his famous books. The Elvish language is in fact a colloquial\(^{(1)}\) language consisting of, among others, Sindarin and Quenya. These two languages are mostly based on Finnish and Welsh. Just as in our way of communication and in our languages, there are also many dialectic forms of the Elvish language (Piittinen, 2015).

The English Literature establishment was not really in love with the creation of Tolkien’s languages used in his novels and was not convinced at all of the effectivity of Tolkien’s languages. Luckily, he had many fans of his books all around the world. Because of that, Tolkien was able to become a successful writer and nowadays he is still famous, thanks to the popular novels like *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*.

Along with the books he has written, he created also new alphabets as Tengwar or Feanorian letters. The alphabet of Tengwar can be identified with the Tibetan one. It is written from left to right and has different ways of writing, such as an English version, a Sindarin and a Quenya mode. The Sindarin and Quenya mode are a component of the Elvish language. This is the communication resource of the Elves, stemming from the Primitive Quendian, their proto-language \(^{(2)}\)(Ager, n.d.).

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\(^{(1)}\) A colloquial language is an informal communication tool to converse with one another on a daily base.

\(^{(2)}\) A proto-language is a language recorded or hypothetical relative of another language or group of languages.
3 Problems with the creation of a world language

Chapter three begins by illustrating the theoretical dimensions of all the possible problems with the creation of a world language. For this research, the influence of the mother tongue and the society has been examined. Furthermore, the analysis of the involvement in culture in terms of music and media has been studied. At last, this chapter will discuss the expansion of a world language.

3.1 Mother tongue

Through our complete history of mankind, the language barriers have always been one of the biggest problems. Every person has its own mother tongue and this ensures the ability to communicate with others who speak the same language. To be of any importance in our community, it is necessary to speak a couple of languages spoken by many. Wanting to travel to Great Britain, for instance, demands the knowledge of the English language, otherwise, nobody will understand the message. For example, we can see that if someone’s mother tongue is Dutch, there will be some smaller or bigger differences in the use and the handling of the English language compared to the native speakers. A native British speaker will exactly hear these small differences in the speech. This is completely inevitable because it is not the mother tongue. (Lapenna, Lins, Carlevaro, Vanden Bempt, 1980).

Our mother tongue is something we have learnt, step by step, throughout lots of different methods. This has been the case from the first moment we existed when we were still living in our mother’s uterus. From the moment we were born, we were constantly tickled to learn this language. It was almost a competition between parents which first words it would be, “daddy” or “mommy”. They would have been absolutely dazed if the first word would have been “doggy”. It is no wonder that we are able to talk properly around the age of two. We are already from a tender age exposed and stimulated to use our mother tongue.

Logically, a world language cannot be learnt as fast as our mother language. In fact, there is only one language we can handle perfectly and this is our mother tongue. We have been learning this even before our birth. With other languages, some differences in fluency, grammar, use of the vocabulary or other aspects of the speech, as the accent will always be notable.

But, there is one big exception to this rule. Some people are raised bilingually. These children need more time to learn both languages, but afterwards, they can speak them without any accent. We can explain this easily. Imagine a mother who speaks English and a father who speaks Dutch. If both of these parents are very consequent in the use of the language, this means that the mother constantly communicates in English, even with her husband and that he does the same in Dutch, even with his wife, it is possible for the child to learn two languages as well as one mother tongue (Sorace, n.d.).

One of the biggest reasons why some people have been trying to create one single world language is to avoid having struggles with the learning and the speaking of a new language. They tried to solve this problem in the communication by introducing a new language. This language had to consist of a practical vocabulary and grammar without any exceptions, or as little as possible (Lapenna, Lins, Carlevaro, Vanden Bempt, 1980).
3.2 Society

Another factor to create a world language is the social aspect. This is underlying, but it sure is as important as the mother tongue. Every country has at least one official language, Belgium even has three. These languages are used by most of the people in that country. Belgium is a very good example to illustrate this. We live in Flanders and speak Dutch, some live in Wallonia and speak French and others live mostly in eastern Belgium near the border with Germany and speak German. Such a small country as Belgium is literally divided by these three languages.

Would it not be better having one single language to communicate with one another, or is there no problem with that? This is already the beginning of this delicate aspect. There will never be a complete agreement on the creation of a world language and no government would forbid its use, certainly not in a democratic system. In a dictatorship, it is easy to say or decide that a country must have one single language, but we cannot tell the world that every country has to accept one practised language.

The society is a hurdle between the creation of this world language because it is not possible to create a new language and announce that everyone has to use this language as often as the main one. Even the use of one already existing language, like English or Chinese, cannot be imposed on all the countries of the world. There is a cultural component which cannot be denied and neglected (Lapenna, Lins, Carlevaro, Vanden Bempt, 1980).
3.3 The involvement in culture

The cultural component attends that there cannot be created a world language, in the meaning that it is practised by every person in the world. It is not easy to impose this language because there are lots of influences from the outer world that we have to keep in mind. A complete new language is absolutely not certain to succeed. The already existing languages are, normally, not in every case, generally accepted. This makes it absolutely not obvious to let it become a new world language.

Nowadays, we are constantly exposed to a lot of languages as French, German and in a considerable amount of time to English. We are on a daily basis exposed to foreign languages throughout many channels as the radio, television, internet, at school, at work and when we listen to music.

3.3.1 Music

Music is one big component in the evolution of language. The music industry is one of the biggest factors in the further development of a language because of several reasons. It happens very often that someone can reform the phonetic pronunciation of a word, but is not able to understand what he or she is actually saying. Music is an incitement to speak and to learn a new language. Music has also been the beginning of the spread of American English. We can explain this because music can be heard on the radio, on YouTube, on Facebook, on television, in films... In fact, a life without music is very hard to conceive because it is audible everywhere at any time.

Scientific research has proved that music can cause a favourable effect in a lot of domains such as the intellectual one. It has also shown that the sound of music can adapt the brain at several levels, like the functional capacities and the structural abilities. The part of the human brain that is most influenced by music is the language. It seems that the music can improve the language learning process. Researchers discovered this musical influence in a recent past. These new neurotic examinations are helping scientists to understand the power of the environmental situations where we are living in right now. It has also been proved that the brain of someone who plays music, produces it and even of those who listen to it, is more developed than those who do not (Moreno, 2009).
3.3.2 Media

The media and more specifically, the social media, are of enormous importance in the evolution and further development of a language. It has been proved that teens in the United States spend a mind-blowing nine hours a day using social media. It is a fact that the Belgian teens are equally addicted to this kind of media. Children are constantly watching TV, videos and films. Furthermore, they like to play games, listen to music and they are non-stop checking their social media accounts. As a result, we must ensure that the language, even on social media, is of good quality because doing these things for almost half of the time that we are awake must be of great influence. Luckily, this addiction can offer a positive outcome to the breeding of the speech and the communication of kids.

These days children are constantly exposed to ‘language', so it may seem a normal reaction that the language in films, videos, on TV, in music and on social media is a good representation of how language has to be used and written. Research has proven that the exactitude is far from consequent and gives these young children a bad idea of the way they have to express themselves. This actually means that the newspapers have to be more aware of the grammatical use and the spelling of their writing. The pronunciation of the news anchors also has to be used with al consciousness in order to avoid failures. When these things are taken into account, the quality of the language that is spread will be far more reliable (Wallace, 2015).

Therefore, it has to be said that the language in the media has to be an example of how language can be used and not, like it is sometimes, a representation of how it cannot be. Coming in contact with the language is for an adult and even for a child too important to neglect the language in its speech or its spelling.

It would be logical to me if the media used the most suited spelling, grammar and pronunciation in order to enhance awareness. The awareness is necessary because a child starts receiving lots of signals out of conversations and music at a very young age. When the language it is exposed to, is not appropriate enough, it will affect the child. The child will consequently have a poor knowledge of the use of language and this will linger on at later age, certainly when the media acknowledge our failures. This would create the imaginary thought that what we say or write is correct when it is not the case.
3.4 The expansion

It has to be said that the expansion of a whole new language cannot be that easy, otherwise there would have been more attempts to create languages as Esperanto. As I have written above, there are some factors involved. A language is, nowadays, commonly spread throughout music and media. It is thanks to its existence that American English has known its extraordinary growth in importance.

It was around 1860 that James Maxwell, who was a Scottish physicist, noticed the existence of radio waves. Later that time in 1886, Heinrich Hertz was able to show the swift variation of electrical power in space in the appearance of radio waves (Verma, n.d.).

Coming to heart of matter is the fact that Esperanto was created in 1887 by Zamenhof shortly after the first discoveries of radio waves. Zamenhof had the tough task to expand his entirely new language over the whole world without the use of media and with only a little access to music, but radio waves offered an excellent opportunity for expansion.
4 The invention of Esperanto

The fourth section of this paper is about the history of Esperanto, of how it has been invented. Who is the artificer and why did he invent Esperanto? Furthermore, it is an opportunity to see how Esperanto has become a world spread language. The last part of this chapter will examine the language itself on a basic grammatical, vocabulary and structural layer.

4.1 Artificer

Lejzer Ludwik Zamenhof (Image 7) was born on December the 15th 1859 in a Jewish family in Białystok. Białystok is nowadays situated in Poland, but at that time, it was a Lithuanian part of the Russian empire. As a result, Zamenhof had to combine a Russian, a Polish, a Lithuanian and a Jewish identity. He tried to make the best of everything. The fact that Białystok is a multicultural city, seemed to have helped him, even in the unstable period under the regime of the tsar. Even though Białystok had a population of 69% Jews, they were considered as an incomplete part of the population and were watched with scorns. His father, Mordechai Mark Zamenhof, decided not to go back to Palestine, he chose to conform as much as possible when he appeared in public. It has to be said that the whole Zamenhof family had an elaborate knowledge of lots of different languages. Lejzer Zamenhof could fluently speak Russian, Yiddish, Latin, Greek and Esperanto. Later on, Zamenhof succeeded to render the Old Testament, written in the Hebrew language, in his own language, Esperanto.

Lejzer Zamenhof, who died in 1917, was an oculist and intrigued by language. The notes he left behind after his death show his fascination, every word he wrote down he made up himself. His second interest was religion. His first publication was in 1887 under his pseudonym Dr. Esperanto. Zamenhof himself sees Esperanto as an identity connected to religion (Van Oostendorp, 2004).
4.2 How the idea has grown

At the time Lejzer Zamenhof had turned thirteen, the family had moved to Warsaw. The young Zamenhof was now convinced of the fact that the relationship between all the different people was not that easy as he thought it was in Russia. This realisation incited him to invite a union language where the difference in language, culture and religion was not significant.

In the first place, Zamenhof was pretty sure that the Jews needed their own language. Jews master many languages, but at that time, they did not have a specific language for themselves that could be used in all circumstances. This was standing in a serious contrast with all other nations which had their proper national language. The Jews could only use Hebrew, which is an extinct language, in their religion. Alongside, they were using Yiddish. Yiddish is a bastardisation\(^{(1)}\) of German and was not considered as a ‘real’ language, not by most of the Jews and not by the other people in the world.

As the Jews were not native speakers of the languages spoken in the regions where they lived, it increased the feeling of not fitting in. They struggled with the idea of never becoming equals of native speakers. Zamenhof first endeavoured to use Greek or Latin as a solution to this problem. A couple of hundreds of years ago, these languages were the colloquial speech, even without any mother tongue speakers. This made Lejzer Zamenhof think that it might be a neutral base to build or rebuild a society. After carefully considering, he reckoned these two classical languages as far too difficult, because of the complicated conjugations and declinations. Moreover, he was not pertinacious about the possible success of an extinct language, in a time of technical evolution, used as the colloquial speech.

Creating a language is not that peculiar. Fantasy is a rich factor of a kid that can invent its proper country with a unique language of speech. Scientific research has proven that twins sometimes create their own languages as their proper communication tool. This is called Cryptophasia. It is nothing more than the creation of a language that can only be understood by identical or fraternal twins.

A language expert is most curious about the creation of a personal, unique grammatical system and vocabulary. He can think of a lot of ways to fabricate a language as easy as possible, with the least possible exceptions. Creating a perfect language throughout five easy processes is not that difficult. First of all, we have to try to simplify the spelling by writing every sound in the same way and afterwards we must pronounce every character in the aforesaid way. Subsequently, irregular verbs cannot be tolerated in the new language. Furthermore, a logical order has to be obtained by placing the words in the sentence according to obvious criteria. At last, it is more practical to replace those words that are already often used in other languages. Lejzer Zamenhof added an even more elaborate system to avoid too many different words. To obtain his hopeful promise, he used several fixed prefixes, infixes and suffixes (Van Oostendorp, 2004).

\(^{(1)}\) “A bastardisation is the change of something in a way that makes it fail to represent the values and qualities that it is intended to represent” (Cambridge University press, n.d.).
4.3 Base of success

Thanks to my personal communication with Cyreen Marcel Knockaert, board member of the Flemish Federation of Esperanto, voluntary librarian of the Flemish Federation of Esperanto and voluntary contributor of the Library of Heritage from Hendrik Conscience, it is easier to imagine what the base of the success of Zamenhof’s Esperanto is.

As we have seen before, shortly before Esperanto had been created by Zamenhof, Johann Martin Schleyer had invented the alike language Volapük. Back then in 1879, the language had a few followers, but almost all of them immediately decided to practise Esperanto when Zamenhof published it in 1887. The artificial language has consciously evolved throughout Zamenhof’s own experiences. This is the reason why Esperanto has a similar vocabulary with the most important Western European languages, especially to the Romans and to a lesser extent to the Germans. In addition to the great regularity and simplicity of the grammar, the vocabulary is very recognisable and easy to memorize mainly for the inhabitants of Western Europe and America. The sincerity, humanity, affability and modesty of Zamenhof have undoubtedly also made a large impression on the people who faced a long period of instability. Nevertheless, Esperanto and its users have not always had an easy ride. They have been persecuted by the Nazis, the Soviets, Franco’s regime, Mussolini’s reign and the Japanese government of the late 1930s. The reason for this was that they suspected the Esperantists to sign a peace agreement and to preach peace and equality.

Notwithstanding these periods of oppression, Esperanto grew stronger and was even flourishing. After this major immersion depth which Esperanto has sustained, countries as Japan were even showing their love towards this language. One of their religions, Oomoto (Image 8), is absolutely embracing Esperanto. The Oomoto religion is a sect of Japan’s ‘New Religions’ which is seen as one of the most influential ones because of several reasons. They have been the source for several other sects because of an early history of an interfaith cooperation (Oomoto, 2010).

The invention of the Internet was also a great leap forward in the further development of Esperanto after a period of struggles (C. Knockaert, personal communication, February the 15th, 2017).
4.4 The spreading

This brings us to the spreading. Zamenhof invested a great deal of his life in spreading his language all over the world. He managed to arouse the enthusiasm of many and he corresponded with them day and night. Zamenhof translated the whole Old Testament and many other literary works. He neglected his personal interests and spent his entire life to his ambition of his own simple language. Luckily, his wife supported him for 100%. Later on, some other supporters of Esperanto began to write and publish in Esperanto and like the saying says: "Many hands make light work". Because of the major successes, Esperanto even received its own flag (Image 9).

Another obvious reason for success was the existence of some lone wolfs in all different countries practising Esperanto and creating their own Esperanto-association. A good example is the foundation of the Esperanto club in Bruges. A man named Antoon Jozef Witteryck started his own club back in 1905. These steps were of significant importance in the success of Esperanto.

The members of Esperanto clubs in Belgium are not that numerous. The estimation comes not further than 450 of which 260 in Flanders and 190 in Wallonia. We can see that there are 34 members of an Esperanto club in East Flanders. It has to be said that it is very hard to get a specific overview. These numbers have to be taken with a grain of salt.

Nowadays the Esperanto community keeps increasing mainly throughout social media. When we would Google it or when we would watch on YouTube, it would be very easy to find lots of information and dozens of videos about Esperanto. It is even possible to follow online lessons which offer an easy method to learn the language all free (C. Knockaert, personal communication, February the 15th, 2017).
5 The language Esperanto

As explained in the part about the reason for inventing Esperanto, Zamenhof created Esperanto in order to have an easy language that could be used by the Jews and also by others all around the world without the valour of any culture or another language. Therefore, he created the easy and logical system of Esperanto, which is shortly examined below.

5.1 Grammar

The grammar of Esperanto is defined in The Sixteen Rules of Esperanto. These regulations have to make it easier to learn the language and to practise it. The illustration of the different rules and its examples are based on The Sixteen Rules of Esperanto written by Don Harlow (1995).

Zamenhof decided not to use any indefinite articles, in order to make an alike definite article, which is the same for all genders, in all cases and numbers.

The fact that a definite article in Esperanto may entitle a group of something is probably the biggest difference with English.

In English, for example, it is said: “Lions are dangerous animals”.

In Esperanto, it is said: “La leono estas danĝera besto”.

A noun in Esperanto is very recognisable by the ending 'o'. The plural of a certain noun can be easily obtained by adding a ‘j’. Esperanto does not have as many cases as Latin, only the nominative and the accusative. The accusative can be formed by adding an 'n'. The other cases as genitive, dative and ablative are uttered by using fix prepositions. To express a genitive in Esperanto they use the preposition ‘de’, for a dative ‘al’ and for the ablative ‘per’. It may seem easy to recognise all these parts in a sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>La hundo persukutis la katojn de la knabo al la domo per bojado.</td>
<td>The dog chased the boy's cats to the house by barking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An adjective can be identified by the ending of an ‘a’ and for the cases\(^{(1)}\), the rules are exactly identical to those for the nouns. Forming a comparative and superlative is not that difficult. In English, the words ‘more’ and ‘most’ are used and in Esperanto, Zamenhof introduced the words ‘pli’ and ‘plej’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>La bruna hundo persekutas la nigrajn katojn.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>The brown dog is chasing the black cats.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>La bruna hundo estas pli granda ol la nigraj katoj.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>The brown dog is larger than the black cats.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>Sed la homo estas la plej granda el ĉiuj.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>But the human being is the largest of all.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tens and hundreds of the numeral system are formed by the logical emplacement of the numerals. Depending on which kind of numeral it is, the numeral is followed by the suffix ‘obl’ for the multiples, ‘on’ for the fractions, ‘op’ for collectives and the participle ‘po’ for the divisionals. From one to ten the numbers are the following: ‘unu’, ‘du’, ‘tri’, ‘kvār’, ‘kvin’, ‘ses’, ‘sep’, ‘ok’, ‘naŭ’, ‘dek’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>Mi donis al ili po tri pomojn.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>I gave them three apples each.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{(1)}\) "A case is a grammatical category indicating whether nouns and pronouns are functioning as the subject of a sentence (nominative case) or the object of a sentence (objective case), or are indicating possession (possessive case)" (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005)
The personal pronouns ‘I’, ‘you’, ‘he’, ‘she’ and ‘it’ are in Esperanto: ‘mi’, ‘vi’, ‘li’, ‘ŝi’ and ‘ĝi’. The personal pronouns ‘we’, ‘you’ and ‘they’ are: ‘ni’, ‘vi’, ‘ili’. ‘Oni’ is, for example, used as the way of speech: ‘It is said’. The personal pronoun consists also out of the adjective ending and the rules as for the nouns have to be applied when talking about the declension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mi amas vin.</td>
<td>I love you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oni diras, ke li amas ŝin.</td>
<td>It is said that he loves her.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rules about the verb are very basic, the person or number remains the same. The ending of a present time is ‘as’, of a past ‘is’ and of a future ‘os’. The conditional mood takes the ending ‘us’, the command mood the ending ‘u’ and the infinitive mood the ending ‘i’. The term ‘command mood’ is used as a literal translation of Zamenhof’s term ‘modo ordona’. A present active participle consists of the ending ‘ant’, the past active of ‘int’, the future active of ‘ont’, the present passive of ‘at’, the past passive of ‘it’ and the future passive of ‘ot’. The passive is formed with the help of the verb ‘to be’ or ‘esti’ in Esperanto and with the aid of the passive participle of the verb needed. The English preposition ‘by’ is in Esperanto used as ‘de’, which is the preposition with the passive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mi amas vin.</td>
<td>I love you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mi amis vin.</td>
<td>I loved you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further explanation

I do not love you any longer, or it is completely irrelevant to the present happening.

(1) The command mood or imperative mood is the grammatical mode to express an order.
**Esperanto**

Mi amo vin.

**English**

I shall love you.

Further explanation

I have not started loving you, or it is completely irrelevant to the present happening.

**Esperanto**

Se vi gajnas la loterion, mi amus vin.

**English**

If you were to win the lottery, I would love you.

Further explanation

This is not likely to happen.

**Esperanto**

Mi deziras, ke vi amu min; do amu min!

**English**

I want you to love me; so love me!

**Esperanto**

Koni lin estas ami lin.

**English**

To know him is to love him.

It is of significant importance to note that the time-sense in Esperanto is not alike to the English time-sense. A present time is expected to be happening right now and to be of importance at the time of expression. Furthermore, the past tense is used to express a completed action or an action that is no longer of any importance. The line of thought about the future tense is the same, it is expected not to be begun or not yet of any importance. The consequence of this time-sense is that an action in the past, in English, would be expressed in the present, in Esperanto, presumed to be as yet going on and of a certain importance.

**Esperanto**

Mi loĝas ĉi-tie jam kvin jarojn.

**English**

I have been living here for five years already.
It has to be said that not all Esperantists agree on the existence of the passive verb. Some consider it to be more evident to use them to transform a verb into an adjective. Zamenhof describes the passive tense as the nexus\(^{(1)}\) between ‘esti’ and the passive participles, but this is in fact the amalgamation of the copulative and the adjective (Forster, 1982).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>La sandviĉo estis manĝata.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>The sandwich was eaten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further explanation</td>
<td>This is expressed in a state of being.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>La sandviĉo estas manĝita.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>The sandwich is eaten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further explanation</td>
<td>This expresses a state of having been eaten.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>La sandviĉo estis manĝita.</th>
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<td>English</td>
<td>The sandwich was eaten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further explanation</td>
<td>This is expressed in a state of having been eaten.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>La sandviĉo estos manĝota.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>The sandwich will be going to be eaten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further explanation</td>
<td>This expresses a state of going to be eaten.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{(1)}\) “A nexus is a connection or series of connections linking two or more things” (Oxford, n.d.).
In general, I have come to the conclusion that the grammar of Esperanto is as simplistic as promised by Zamenhof. The word order is also very typical: subject – verb – object. Adjectives either follow the nouns or precede them.

I do agree on the fact that the grammatical and structural system is very logically developed. However, it seems a bit too optimistic when some well-established organisations like Duolingo\(^\text{(1)}\) declare and promise that it is possible and very probable to learn Esperanto in only 150 hours. In their comparison, they came to the statement that learning English would take over 1500 hours of study. Through here they obviously want to prove that Esperanto is extremely easy to learn.

According to my way of thinking, these numbers are irrelevant and magnified. I have a proper grasp of this conclusion that it is impossible to compare a certain period of time with the capability of learning a language. When can we say that someone is totally familiar with a language? On which information have they based their research? However, I am convinced of the fact that a language like Esperanto is easier to learn than English. Esperanto is completely made up of logical constructions and structures without any exceptions.

### 5.2 Vocabulary

After the clarification of the Sixteen Rules of Esperanto, it is time to look at the vocabulary of Esperanto. The major part, around 84% was derived from Latin, another 14% was Germanic based and 2% Slavic and Greek. This is why speakers of Romanic languages as Dutch and French will find it easy to learn Esperanto. Logically, this results from the fact that many Esperanto words look familiar to the vocabulary in Romanic languages. In accordance with this rule, we can see in the examples underneath that some words in Esperanto are exactly the same as in Latin or akin (Thompson, 2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>esperanto</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>homo / vir</td>
<td>homo / viro</td>
<td>male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>salutare</td>
<td>verb: saying hello</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>esperanto</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>saluton</td>
<td>noun: hello</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^\text{(1)}\) Duolingo is an organisation that offers online languages courses.
6 The vivacity of Esperanto

The artificial language Esperanto does already exist for 132 years. Is it still popular nowadays? In the section that handles about the vivacity of Esperanto, some information in depth about the numbers worldwide with the use of a clear overview of the number of speakers in comparison to the five biggest languages can be found. Furthermore, this chapter offers a summary of all the locations where Esperanto was the most popular.

6.1 Number of speakers

It is very hard to paste a certain quantity on the speakers of a language. To receive accurate details about this subject, we should conduct a worldwide census. This is of course a hopeless task. Nevertheless, Professor Sidney S. Culbert of the University of Washington, Seattle, has taken steps with a comprehensive survey to map Esperanto as well as possible. Therefore, he has travelled all around the world to take notes of the professional proficiency of the language. To be seen as an Esperantist, the users had to be able to discuss a proper conversation in Esperanto.

Having taken into account many criteria, Professor Culbert decided that there were about two million speakers of Esperanto on a world basis. An estimation concludes that there are around a thousand people who speak Esperanto as a first language. They were often taught Esperanto along with their local language, by their parents. This is also the reason why the number of speakers can remain grosso modo constant. It is a language passed on generation after generation. Nevertheless, we have to conclude that Esperanto belongs to the minor part of speakers. For instance, Lithuanian has 2.9 million and Hebrew 9 million speakers (Esperanto FAQ, n.d.).

To place these numbers in a broader context, we can look at the graphic underneath (Image 10) that Chinese, Spanish, English, Arabic and Hindi belong to the big five of languages. There are 1284 million of people who speak Chinese as a first language in a total of 37 countries. Spanish comes in second with 437 million in 31 different countries. English has 372 million speakers in 106 different countries. So, English is definitely the most spread language. Arabic comes fourth. This language is spoken in 57 countries. This is in contrast with Hindi that has 260 million speakers in only five different countries (Ethnologue Languages of the World, n.d.).
6.2 Countries where spoken

As said in the previous part, it is very hard to get an accurate number of the speakers of a certain language. Making a clear overview of the countries where Esperanto is mostly spoken is definitely equally difficult, mostly, because it is not an official language in any country. It failed to become an official language in a very small territory: Esperanto was almost recognised by Neutral Moresnet (Image 11), a small Belgian-Prussian political territory. Neutral Moresnet has been the smallest republic of the world for over hundred years before it got annexed by Belgium after World War I.

In the Republic of Rose Island, Italy, Esperanto was the only official language. The Republic of Rose Island has never been recognised as an official country and was destroyed by the Italian government after an invasion. The government believed that it was a tax strategy.

Nowadays Esperanto is often practised in Europe as a pastime action. In some countries, we can see a higher density of Esperanto speakers. Hungary is the country in Europe with the most practitioners. This can be explained because of the fact that Hungarian students can learn Esperanto at school. At the Academy of Sciences in San Marino, the lessons are even taught in Esperanto. It is quite peculiar that countries with non-related languages have put the most effort to spread Esperanto. When we look closer to Asia, we can see that there is a big density in China. Esperanto is not that popular as, for example, Europe, but it has lots of people with some skills in Esperanto. China is typified for its oscillation or natural process in the number of speakers (Helps, 2015).
7 The future of Esperanto

Which possible perspectives are there nowadays and which of them can be a justified choice for the future? Is Esperanto a language that can solace the political, economic and religious turbulence? Or is Esperanto just a language that has not been able to become an equivalent of others? These questions will soon be answered in the following parts. Has Esperanto failed or not? Will we need a new kind of artificial language? These questions will get answered and my own opinion will be expressed.

7.1 Success or failure

A small part of the world population considers Esperanto as a failed world language, the major part sees it as a succeeded new artificial language. Having closely studied the reason for inventing Esperanto, we can conclude that it has not been the purpose of Zamenhof to create a world language. Anyhow, it is more logical to recon the tens of thousands of books in Esperanto, often literary works as well as books on various subjects, as a help in the spreading of Esperanto.

About the phenomenon 'language' there have been published lots of thoughts. So, it is normal that the opinions about this fragile subject are divided. Nevertheless, we have to conclude that Zamenhof's invention of Esperanto was a failure in the perspective of a union language, but a success when we see it as, a useful communication tool (C. Knockaert, personal communication, February the 15th, 2017).

Another aspect that pleases against the failure are the many meetings with Esperantists of all around the world and the annual World Congress of Esperanto. The 101st congress took place in Nitra Slovakia, from July 23rd to July 31st. This annual event has taken place since 1905 and has only been interrupted during the First and the Second World War. For the last 97 years, the World Esperanto Association has been responsible for it (The organisation team, n.d.).

The Belgian Minister of Education Hilde Crevits has suggested in her final report concerning the renewed final qualifications that it would be very helpful to offer Esperanto at schools, in addition to French and English. This artificial language of 130 years old would procure the students better insights in the most diverse situations. This is another reason why Esperanto really succeeded as an artificial language and keeps giving perspectives even these days. Ludwig Zamenhof will possibly succeed in his project even hundreds of years after his death. The fact that Esperanto is considered by the Ministers, is a good reason why it will be possible for Esperanto to become a neutral international auxiliary language (Goethals, 2016).
In Peter Forster’s book *The Esperanto Movement* there are some good overviews about the number of people gathered at this World Congress. As it is notable in the graphic underneath (Image 12), there are many oscillations in the number of participants. The first five years had an overall total of 6205 contributors and from then on the World Esperanto Congress had a major setback. This can be declared because of the instability and the preamble to the First World War. After this period without any congress, we can see a very quick increase in the years that followed. The same phenomenon occurred in the preamble of the Second World War (Forster, 1982). From then on till today, we can see that the number of participants stays overall stable with now and then some growths and some decreases depending on the location where it took place (European Youth Portal, n.d.).

It is certainly not incorrect nor an exaggeration to say that Esperanto has become a component of the world culture. The language will not disappear anymore because it is already to a large degree accepted in many countries (C. Knockaert, personal communication, February the 15th, 2017).
New kind of artificial language

We need a neutral language as Esperanto if we aim for justice and equality and we need Esperanto if we want to avoid that the Englishmen receive certain privileges. We have to avoid that those who speak English are of a bigger importance than those who do not.

Do we still live in the Middle Ages? Certainly not, so, it does not make any sense to create a whole new artificial language. The language Zamenhof designed is, in its purest form, perfect and does not feel unnatural. So far, Esperanto is the only artificial language that got off the ground. All other attempts were in comparison complete failures and got stuck in their design stage.

For those reasons of justice and equality, just like Zamenhof wanted it in his time, we have to aim for a neutral language as Esperanto. This language can become a communication tool without certain privileges or without any other specific importance. This means that the language in first place aims for this equality that we want to obtain. In this case, the language will be completely standing next to religion, politics, economics, countries and even regions. It will no longer be a part of the language. This kind of usage of Esperanto has to be sufficient to create more stability and peace all over the world. There would no longer be miscommunication because of other interpretations of a word or other interests attached to it.

To the question, if we need a new kind of Esperanto we can say: "No". To the question, if there has to be some change we say: "Yes". The most important aspect would be that the Esperantists accept some ameliorations and that they are all willing to use those rules Zamenhof created (C. Knockaert, personal communication, February the 15th, 2017).
7.3 My opinion

Thanks to the research, I have been able to form my own opinion about the future of Esperanto. Besides the inclination that some Esperanto-authors do not want to follow the exact rules and that they subsequently degenerate the language by not rejecting the idiomatic forms. If this trend will be recognised, I think Esperanto will lose its basic requirement.

These days personal and group interests work successfully against Esperanto. Anyone who has acquired privileges based on his or her language skills will, consciously or unconsciously, be working against Esperanto. I think that Zamenhof’s idea of a single neutral international auxiliary language without repressing the mother tongue nor the official language is still a very good and useful idea. Over the long haul, a good idea will always win. A lie has no legs. Maybe Esperanto will need centuries and many wars before it will prevail as an international auxiliary language because of some for, this moment unpredictable, historical circumstances, but it will prevail. Greek, Latin, French... were once world languages. They are no longer of that importance. My opinion is that there can always be some kind of explosive situations in history that will make it the only acceptable solution for each person, region, country or continent to communicate with the neutral international auxiliary language, Esperanto. I am also convinced of the fact that the Chinese, Spanish, English, Arabic and Hindi-speakers will not tolerate the fact that the Englishmen are so dominant, for many more centuries. I have formed this opinion during my research. By looking at the graphical representation of the big five of languages (Image 10) we can clearly see that these languages are very numerous in its speakers. It is my perception that they will ask questions about their rather limited influence. This will encourage them to spread their language and culture in order to become an equivalent of the English language and its speakers and to be no longer oppressed by its booming culture.

In my opinion, it now comes up to, in the first place, the Esperantists, to bring Esperanto to its purest form, to preserve it and to practise it and to keep it as a gift and a cure for the sickness of our world. In second methinks that the United Nations could postulate Esperanto as a good example of an auxiliary language in order to simplify the negotiations between all different countries.
8 The Future of British and American English: an alternative to Esperanto?

This last chapter ought to give a perspective of the two biggest forms of English. It is purely meant to look what a largely spread official language can achieve and how it will evolve over time. That way a complete overview of both Esperanto and British and American English will give a preview of the future.

David Crystal, an expert in linguistics, estimates that there is just one native speaker to every five non-native speakers of English. Because English is so widely spoken we can define many variations of English. From all those different groups British and American English are the biggest (Ives-Keeler, 2014).

British English may be the oldest of the two, it is the American English spelling that is the most popular one. A recent examination has even shown that American English is far more often used in publications than British English. According to the date, this change further developed partly ‘thanks’ to the First World War. Now people prefer the spelling of ‘flavor’ instead of the original ‘flavour’ and ‘gray’ instead of ‘grey’. The conclusion is clear: both languages have evolved over time and they changed popularity. In the beginning, people preferred British above American English and nowadays it is the other way around (Macdonald, 2016).

Since Great Britain has decided to leave the European Union, we will see that the popularity of British English will further decrease. Nevertheless, we can notice the change in its function. English has become a neutral, utilitarian language. It is so useful because everybody understands it. This is also the reason why many see the similarity with Zamenhof’s purpose of Esperanto becoming a neutral international auxiliary language (The Economist, 2016).

Overall, we cannot avoid the fact that American English is the most widespread language and that it will further spread itself worldwide throughout mostly music and media. Nonetheless, British English will keep existing and keep having its adherents. This because English has a cultural component which does not exist in Esperanto. This cultural component will be of significant importance in the upcoming decades.
9 Conclusion

After a lot of research, the artificial language Esperanto has become much clearer to me. First of all, I have stipulated the definitions of a natural language and an artificial one. The difference between both is that an artificial or constructed language has been consciously created for own interests. A natural language, on the other hand, can be defined as a communication tool which has developed naturally as a method of communication between people. In the intriguing history of artificial languages, it has come to light that people have been searching for new resources to communicate in a very approachable way.

In the second chapter, the best-known artificial codes and languages have been examined. The artificial codes, sign language and Braille, both have been created for the benefit of the artificer. The unknown inventor(s) of sign language used gestures for the improvement of their communication. The young Frenchman Louis Braille invented a system of elevated dots which made the reading easier for blind people.

The artificial language Volapük was invented by Johann Martin Schleyer in 1879 and had as the main purpose to express thoughts as clearly and accurately as possible. He tried to reach his objective by excluding those sounds that would be difficult to pronounce by speakers of other languages. After the invention of Esperanto eight years later, Volapük was considered to be dead.

An unofficial Delegation for the Adoption of an International Auxiliary Language suggested in 1907-1908 a variant and successor of Esperanto, named Ido. After the failed negotiations between the Delegation and Zamenhof, they started their own new movement, which grew rapidly. Many practitioners of Esperanto deserted to Ido, but after the oppressions of the First World War, it was only Esperanto that grew strong enough to regain adherents.

In the section concerning films and literature, we have come to the conclusion that directors have often invented a whole new language to communicate in the most suitable way: the Klingon language in Star Trek, the Na’vi language in Avatar, the Dothraki language in the series of Game of Thrones. In the literature, it was John Ronald Reuel Tolkien who created his own communication tool in order to communicate with his wife and to pass on the secret information of his location during the First World War. Because of the major successes of his novels, he has been able to invent Elvish language and to create new alphabets as Tengwar or Feanorian.

The possible problems with the creation of a world language have also been scrutinised. We could see that there are many important aspects involved such as the mother tongue. From that, it has become apparent that there is only one language which can be handled perfectly, namely the mother tongue. With other languages, some differences in fluency, grammar, use of vocabulary or other aspects of the speech as the accent will be notable, except for those who are raised bilingually. One of the biggest reasons why people have been trying to create one single world language is to avoid having struggles with the learning and the speaking of a new language.

Furthermore, society is also a very important hurdle in creating a world language. It seems unlikely to artifice a new language and announce that everyone has to use this language as often as the mother tongue. Even the use of one already existing language, like English or Chinese, cannot be imposed on all the countries of the world. There is a cultural component which cannot be denied and neglected.
A third aspect is the involvement in culture, where we can see the importance of music and media. If the language used in songs and by the media is applied to the most suited spelling, grammar and pronunciation, it enhances the awareness. This is necessary because a child starts receiving lots of signals from conversations and music at a very young age. When the language it is exposed to, is not appropriate enough, it will affect the language development of the child.

The epitome of Esperanto was possible because of Lejzer Ludwik Zamenhof, better known as Dr. Esperanto, who wanted the Jews to have their proper language. Later on, he thought of Esperanto to become a neutral international auxiliary language that could possibly solve conflicts without any involvement of social, cultural or religious aspects. This idea had grown because of Zamenhof’s youth. Him being a Jew in times of instability in a multilingual environment made him consider to create his own language. Esperanto was a good alternative in times of instability. This has also been the base of success of Esperanto.

Nowadays language is spread throughout all kinds of media, but in ancient times, it only depended on personal communication. Luckily, it was a couple of years before the invention of Esperanto that James Maxwell had discovered radio waves. So, in 1887 Zamenhof was able to use this in spreading his own language all over the world. Nowadays, the Esperanto community keeps increasing mainly throughout social media such as the Internet.

The next chapter is about the language of Esperanto itself, with the unique aspect of only having sixteen grammatic rules without any exceptions. The vocabulary of Esperanto was also for 84% derived from Latin. For me, after studying Latin for almost six years, it may not be too hard to study this language and to converse in Esperanto. Furthermore, it does also have very logical constructions and structures.

Next, I have compared the number of speakers of Esperanto to the big five of languages, in order to obtain an overview of the vivacity of Esperanto. Chinese, Spanish, English, Arabic and Hindi are the most spoken languages in the world. These languages have millions of speakers and Esperanto only a couple of million. So its vivacity is limited. These days Esperanto is often practised in Europe as a pastime action. The biggest concentration of Esperanto speakers can be found in Hungary and San Marino, where they can learn it at school. In Asia, we can locate the biggest density of speakers in China.

The last part of my paper was about my perspectives of the future of Esperanto and the future of English, a language that has spread throughout the world. First of all, I was able to conclude that Esperanto is a succeeded new artificial language, which I also consider to become one day or another a neutral international auxiliary language. After studying the numbers of participants of the World Esperanto Congress, I have come to the conclusion that, in the last forty years, there has been an enormous expansion of the participants. The last years, there has been a downstroke, which is now stagnating. In my opinion, we will not need another new artificial language, if the Esperantists manage to bring Esperanto to its purest form. They should preserve it and practise it and let the United Nations postulate Esperanto as a good example of an auxiliary language, in order to simplify the negotiations between all different countries.

The major problem with Esperanto is the lack of a cultural component. That is why it always has to compete with the big five of languages and, most of all, with English, but Esperanto has intrinsically some qualities to grow into a more important way of communication.
10 Bibliography


